STORES in Midway

Little is known about stores operated in the very early settlements of Midway. Henry and Mary Jane Coleman had a store in connection with their saw mill in the Upper Settlement before the Fort was built.

Richard Sherlock operated a store in the Fort on the square. James Gunn and George Snyder had small stores in the first years of the town.

James B. Wilson ran a store in one room of his home. The business was taken care of by Mrs. Wilson, leaving time for Mr. Wilson to go for supplies and take care of his farm. It was hard to keep supplies coming in all of the stores of this period. The merchants traded their store goods for eggs, butter, grain, hay and other produce. Not much money was exchanged. The children of these earlier days remember trading eggs and squirrel tails at Wilson's store for hard rock candy they loved.

Common to all the early merchants were the hardships borne to stock their stores to satisfy the needs of the people. All stocks were brought in by team. The roads were often difficult to travel, and wholesale stocks were limited.

The old-Co-op store stood where the present Rose Garden grows. It was run by Bishop David Van Wagoner for the stockholders. Later he purchased the store. It was a typical general store of the time. The Post Office was in the same building. From an advertisement we learn that the store was flourishing in 1891. It was a prosperous store and its barns and sheds were filled with hay, grain, and farm produce to be used as medium of exchange. Many of the older people of the town gathered here to talk over their day's work, their crops, politics, and the weather. After Bishop Van Wagonen retired from the operation of the store, his son, David L. Van Wagonen, took charge of it. Later his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. David Murdock operated it. Mr. Mark Jeffs of Heber City purchased the store and for a number of years it was managed by Mr. Jeff's daughter, Emma, and her husband, John A. Fortie. Leah Kohler clerked in the Co-op for years. 582

Merchants and Their STORES

Mr. and Mrs. David Murdock ran a store later in their home, now owned by David E. Provost.

Gottfried Buhler operated a store in his home, and then built a store near his house. Mary Jane Abplanalp clerked for Mr. Buhler. Later he built a new store by the German Hall. This store was a very well-stocked establishment. Mr. Buhler's daughter, Adeline (Ardell), helped her father. Finally the store closed and was converted into a creamery.

Another store which had a long life was one operated by Gottlieb Probst in his home. He carried candy and small items of merchandise. Mr. Probst was crippled and conducted his business from a chair. It was here that for many years the young people would gather in the evening to visit and sing. Mr. Probst loved the youth of the community.

One of the oldest continuously operated stores in the town was the Bonner Mercantile Store. George Bonner, Sr., aided by his sons, George and William Bonner, began this business in his home. It was a small enterprise at first, and then as business grew and the sons took it over, it justified a large new building where the store presently stands. This was built in 1879. George bought his brother's share. He proved to be a highly esteemed merchant and his business prospered. His daughters, Phebie and Margaret, clerked for him. Later his youngest daughter, June, became the bookkeeper. After Mr. Bonner's death, his daughter, Margaret, and her husband, Albert Stewart, purchased the business. June remained as bookkeeper. Mrs. Stewart did all the buying. Mr. Stewart brought in the merchandise and then delivered the purchases to far-away customers. He made his deliveries to the mines in the area, both winter and summer. The store was a general country store and supplied practically all the needs of the community. In 1948 Mr. and Mrs. Albert Stewart retired from business and sold the store to Mr. and Mrs. Leland Ivers. Mrs. Ivers is the daughter of Thomas Bonner, a brother of George Bonner. So the store has really never left the Bonner family. It was renamed "Iver's Mercantile," has been remodeled and modernized, and is today a prosperous, up-to-date general store.

Mr. and Mrs. William Watkins operated a small store near their home in connection with the Post Office. Mr. Watkins also put up ice for sale. His store housed, for several years, the only telephone in town and only the most important messages were telephoned in.

For some time in the history of the town, the sweet tooth of the community was satisfied by the ice cream and candy sold by William Watkins and Thomas Hair.

Mr. Hair was the town barber for years. He established his shop and a confectionery in the pot-rock building adjacent to the big rock building on Main Street that served as the dance and theatre auditorium. Both buildings were erected by George Bonner and they still stand. The large building is now the Wasatch Stake Bishops' Storehouse.

Bishop Henry T. Coleman and Simon Epperson opened a store in

1910 called "The Midway Drug Store." A confectionery was installed. Mr. Coleman soon bought the shares of Mr. Epperson. Dancing every week, and sometimes twice a week in the amusement hall offered splendid patronage for both Mr. Hair and Mr. Coleman. Young and old alike enjoyed these stores, couples gathered at small tables with curved wire legs and ate their home-made ice cream in style. Mr. Hair and Bishop Coleman watched over the young people with kindly eyes, and a word of advice was often given, and often asked for, regarding romance, business, and behavior. In April, 1917, Guy Coleman bought his father's business. In 1922 Guy's brother, Henry S., bought the business and ran it for a year. Guy Coleman then repurchased the store from Henry. Today the store has been greatly enlarged and completely modernized. Guy's son, Pete, is a partner in the business, which is known as Coleman's Store. It is a flourishing grocery store and up-to-date market.

Adjoining the Coleman store, a grocery store and meat market was opened years ago and was owned and managed by brothers, William L. and Bishop John Van Wagoner. Their sisters, Nancy and Luella Van Wagoner clerked in the store. Later the store was bought by a group of townspeople, with Bishop Jacob Probst in charge. Mr. Parley Van Wagoner was manager for a time. Still later, Dean and Albert Van Wagoner, brothers of the original owners, started another grocery store and meat market. They operated for several years. Valorous Provost operated a market there for awhile. This part of the building is now included in the Coleman Store.

Another business that was operated years ago was a small store owned by Mrs. George (Lettie) Bronson. Her store was near her home which still stands across from the Second Ward meeting house. Mrs. Bronson was a Van Wagoner.

At one time Mr. Wilford Van Wagoner and his son, Walter, operated a store in the old Co-op building. They had a dry-goods store and sold men's clothing, rubber boots, coats, heavy pants and shirts. The store prospered until the Snake Creek Tunnel project closed and then the Van Wagoners went out of business. During this time Mr. and Mrs. David Murdock ran their little candy and grocery store adjacent to the Co-op. After the clothing store closed, Walter Van Wagoner ran a pool hall in the Co-op building.

Brothers William and James Alder opened the first butcher shop in Midway. The building stood in the northeast corner of the old Alder lot.

Mr. Reed Kohler ran a grocery store and meat market for a number of years in a building near his home.

Almost forgotten in Midway is an old photograph gallery. It stood on the Bishop John Watkins lot, now the Henry T. Coleman property. It was just east of the Big Pine Tree. It was operated by Mary Ann (Polly) Watkins, daughter of Bishop Watkins, now Mrs. William

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Women of the earlier days made their purchases of millinery, gloves, collars and other feminine apparel from Mrs. Mary Jane Coleman McCarrell. She made hats, trimmed them with flowers, velvet, ribbon, lace, and feathers. The women of Midway were really fashion conscious. Matilda Gerber Jacobs also was a fine milliner at that time. Later, Myrtle Abplanalp ran a successful millinery business.

Among the accomplished dressmakers of earlier days were Mary Jane Coleman McCarrell, Matilda Gerber Jacobs, Jane Alder Watkins, Elinor Blood Watkins, Maggie J. Wilson, and Elizabeth Coleman Epperson.

Midway is a small town, but is proud of the following successful business enterprises today: Ivers Mercantile, owned and operated by Leland and Glenna Ivers; Coleman's Store, owned and operated by Guy E. and Pete Coleman; The Alpine, a cafe, service station, and pool hall, owned and operated by the Bronson brothers, Lazelle, Harvey, and Keith Bronson who also run a successful coal business; Bill's Service Station, owned by Guy E. Coleman and operated by Bill Mair; Al's Service Station, owned and operated by Alvin Zufelt; Farm Implements and Appliance, owned and operated by Albert Kohler; Rothe Lumber Company, owned and operated by Kurt Rothe; "The Timp Freeze," a drive-in, owned and operated by George Remund and son; Watch and clock repair shop, owned and operated by Orson Burgi; Plumbing business, by Wilburn Huffaker; Ceramic creations, by LaVon Hair; Machinery and car repair shop, by Theo Daybell; Alma Durtschi, cement finishing; Earl and Ray Kohler, building contractors; bicycle repair shop owned and operated by Raymond North.

end of stores

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